

WINTER 2011

Accent

AN AVILA UNIVERSITY
PUBLICATION



Avery Abernathy, D.O. '03

"Avila gave me opportunities to develop my leadership skills."

Jason Gatewood, M.D. '01

"At Avila, you learn to work 1-on-1 in a smaller environment ... it holds you accountable and motivates you to achieve your best."



Kansas City Mayor Sly James receives a personal tour of Avila's changing landscape from President Ron Slepitzza, Ph.D.

When you visit Avila's campus, the first thing you notice is a physical transformation. We have added beautiful new signage to boldly announce Avila's presence in the community, to visitors, and friends. (Thank you Jeanne Hamilton Olofson, DHL, '92, '94, '11 and the Victor E. and Caroline Schutte E. Foundation – Trust E. for making this possible.) It is the first indication that Avila is a changed place, an inviting place, a place where exciting things are happening, and lives are being changed. This change is only one of our \$13.5 million of improvements being completed over last year and during the year ahead. Other changes include:

- We have completed a multi-functional pavilion adjacent to the Mabee Fieldhouse that will allow us to host intramural sports, provide an additional team practice area and host a variety of social functions.
- Another dramatic addition is the installation of artificial turf on our athletic fields. While impressive in its own right, the biggest benefit is that we can now host four sports on campus for the first time in Avila's history—football, soccer, baseball and softball. Saturdays this fall have been much more vibrant with football and soccer games now truly being at home. Moreover, our neighbors at St. Thomas More have enjoyed playing some of their football games on the new field. It is quickly becoming an outdoor center for campus and community life.
- Our dining hall also has undergone a major renovation to not only accommodate our growing student population, but to provide a flexible learning environment. This project will be completed over this year as we expand the seating area under a glassed atrium.
- We updated the Whitfield lobby by installing picture-glass windows and a much improved lounge to create an open, inviting gathering space that is used by students and for special events. This space is also conveniently adjacent to

The Changing Face of Avila

our new campus Subway sandwich shop. This improvement provides an alternative eating option, especially popular among our commuter, evening, and adult students.

The physical transformation is only part of the story. We have added several people to our Avila team who will help us as we make further plans for our future. Two are on our Advancement team—Angie Heer, vice president for advancement and external relations, and Robin Rowland, executive director of development.

Angie comes to us from Harvesters – The Community Food Network and Robin joins us from The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City. In their respective organizations, both individuals did a phenomenal job securing the resources necessary for new programs, growth and unprecedented success. We anticipate similar results at Avila. During the same time period, Avila recruited Gary Gallup as director of athletics. With a rich history in college athletics, Gary is poised to lead our teams to success and capitalize on our greatly improved athletic facilities. I encourage you to learn more about these outstanding individuals by reading their profiles in this issue of Accent.

While speaking of growth, I want to underscore a popular new initiative around which we are receiving considerable interest. It is called the Avila University Guarantee. Beginning in January 2012, Avila guarantees a minimum scholarship of \$10,000 per year to any graduate of a Catholic high school who meets our admissions criteria and who starts as a first-year student. Through this program, we want to support those families who have made the commitment to support the values and quality of Catholic education by guaranteeing a return on the investment they've made. We think it will enhance our Catholicity and help families see a quality education like we offer as being affordable.

With all of this great progress on the Avila campus, one thing remains the same: the open, friendly and engaging campus that we call home. I would love to show you the campus through my eyes, and I invite you to come take a tour. In fact, we encourage our neighbors to walk the campus, have lunch in the cafeteria, participate in Mass and attend our sporting events.

These are exciting times. While we have already achieved much, our vision is to the future. With your ongoing support, we will continue opening doors, in education and in life, for the next generation of Avila University graduates.

Ron Slepitzza, Ph.D., CSJA
President

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Avila President

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ON THE Cover

Avery Abernathy, D.O. '03
and Jason Gatewood, M.D. '01

Former roommates forged long-lasting
friendship while pursuing medical careers.

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Valdez and Ojile named to Board of Trustees

Ana Valdez '96 and Christine Ojile '82 are the two newest members of Avila University's Board of Trustees. As such, they become part of what is now a 26-person panel which makes policy and oversees the operations and budget at Avila.

"Ana Valdez and Christine Ojile epitomize what we are looking for in trustees for Avila University," said Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., president. "Their dedication to excellence in their professional and personal lives, along with a commitment to service and devotion to Avila, make them perfect choices to join our Board of Trustees. We all look forward to their input and contributions to the board and university in the near future and beyond."

Valdez, who obtained a master's in business administration from Avila in 1996, is the executive director of the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility, a coalition of Hispanic organizations throughout the U.S. that advocates for inclusion of Hispanics in corporate America, headquartered in Washington D.C. She has spent nearly 20 years working with numerous non-profit, grass roots and community-based organizations and has worked at Fortune 500 companies such as General Electric, H&R Block and Sprint. She has served on the boards of several Hispanic leadership organizations in the Kansas City area and was founding president of the Kansas City chapter of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs.

"As an alumnus of Avila University, I am honored to have been selected to serve on the Board of Trustees," Valdez said. "My aspiration is to ensure that we regard diversity at all levels of the university and to embrace that spirit in all facets of the responsibility for which we have been assigned. I look forward to serving the students and faculty of Avila and to contribute to its reputation as an outstanding institution of higher learning."

Ojile, who earned a bachelor of science in business management, along with minors in economics, psychology and studio art from Avila in 1982, has served on the Avila Board of Counselors since 1996, including several years as chair. She also serves on the Advancement Committee and was instrumental in recruiting several new members in 2010. She is regional vice president for client development at Kantar Retail, a global retail research, training and consultancy business that delivers a competitive advantage to clients through forward-looking insights, proven advisory and transformative education. She is a member of Kantar Retail's sales leadership council and client advisory board. Christine also represents her company on the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville Executive Education Advisory Board. She has received awards and recognition for leadership and producing exceptional team/individual results.



Ana Valdez



Christine Ojile

Prior to joining Kantar Retail, Christine had an extensive career with Hallmark Cards Inc. in sales, training, trade/customer marketing and project management. Her experience included assignments of increasing responsibility in both North America and international arenas. She is a member of the American Marketing Association and Network of Executive Women.

"I am excited to continue my involvement with the Avila community," said Ojile. "Through my many years as both a student and volunteer, I have thoroughly enjoyed my Avila connection. As I embark on my new position on the Board of Trustees, I am eager to share my knowledge and experience to help the organization continue to build on its solid foundation." 🗣️

New Entrance Signage

On August 31, Avila dedicated the new monument signage at the main entrance of the university. On hand for the ceremony were Jeanne Hamilton Olofson, DHL, '92, '94, '11 and her husband Tom Olofson, major donors to the project in conjunction with the Victor E. and Caroline Schutte E. Foundation – Trust E.



Jeanne received the Doctor of Humane Letters (DHL) degree during Avila's 2011 graduation. She earned a bachelor of arts with a major in communication and a concentration in business in 1992 and completed her master of business administration two years later. She is the first person in Avila's history to receive all three degrees.



Marian Center Renovation

To accommodate both the growing student population and the need for a flexible learning environment, Avila completely renovated the dining hall. The transformation included new lighting, flooring, tables and seating, as well as flat screen TVs. Because Avila is a wi-fi campus, the dining hall now provides an inviting space outside of meal times for people to gather socially and to study.



New Athletic Pavilion

The new pavilion, located next to the existing Mabee Fieldhouse, provides much needed practice space for Avila's sports teams. In addition, it opens up opportunities for intramural sports as well as social gatherings. A special feature to this building is actually outside in the form of a rain garden, which not only addresses Avila's desire to increase its "green" initiative but also provides a visually attractive space for surrounding neighbors.



New Multi-Sport Complex

The new athletic field, completed over the summer, allows Avila to host four sports—football, softball, baseball and soccer on campus. With a press box, electronic video scoreboard and bleachers, the turfed field can be used year-round and will be open to community groups.



OUR GENEROUS DONORS!



Whitfield Center Renovation

The recently renovated Whitfield lobby incorporates not only new furnishings but also picture windows, which flood the area with natural light. This inviting setting encourages people to gather for small group meetings throughout the day. Conveniently located adjacent to the lobby is a Subway restaurant, a popular alternative food option on campus for faculty, staff and students as well as area neighbors.



FUTURE GROWTH!

New Residence Hall

Construction of a new residence hall on the north side of campus will accommodate additional students on campus for the 2012-13 school year. In addition to the building, there will be a walking path and other amenities to enhance the campus as well as the surrounding neighborhood.



Dean leads students in health-care fields

Larry Sullivan, Ph.D., remembers it like it was yesterday ... only, it was many, many years ago.

A young woman, a student in one of Sullivan's classes, walked into his office one afternoon as dozens of students had before. She told him she wanted to enroll in a medical school and wanted to know what she needed to do to get admitted.

For one of the few times in his then-short career in academia, Sullivan was dumbfounded.

"I had no idea how to advise her," he said. "It was in the early (1970s), and I hadn't had to deal with that before. I knew that if I was to service students correctly, I had to know these things."

That meeting ignited a passion in Sullivan, now dean of the School of Science and Health at Avila University, that's now lasted more than three decades – to counsel undergraduate, pre-health-major students on how to go about getting into medical schools or professions of their choice.

"I learned the intricacies of health professions admissions," Sullivan said. "I love working with people here (at Avila), but there's a lot going on outside of Avila. It was fun for me to meet with outside faculty and not only learn about admissions, but also about different curriculums. I learned to do other things that I've been able to bring back to Avila."

One such endeavor was with the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP). He began working with the organization in the early '70s when it was hosting a regional meeting in Kansas City, and he offered to help. He was nominated to the board for the CAAHP, the central regional organization, quickly became its president and eventually moved to the national board.

He served as the NAAHP's first treasurer for a couple years. Then, he was asked to chair a national meeting of the organization in 2002 in Las Vegas. Attendance turned out to be the highest ever, and he spent the next six years in an executive capacity – two as president-elect, two as president and two as immediate past president.

And it all circles back to Avila, which is the only university in which he has ever taught and where he has called his home away from home for the last 38 years.

After attaining his baccalaureate in chemistry in the late '60s at the University of Pittsburgh and his doctoral in physical chemistry in 1971 from Case Western Reserve in Cleveland, he found teaching jobs few and far between.

"I remember seeing the back page of Life magazine back then, and there was this picture of a guy wallpapering the walls of his apartment

with rejection letters," Sullivan said with a chuckle.

He began post-doctoral research at Kansas University while still actively searching for a teaching position. He found that position at Avila in '73 and has been here since.

"The main things I like (about Avila) are, you can really work 1-on-1 with students, and you can really make a difference in people's lives," he said. "Layer on that the values of the (Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet) ... they're always things I've believed in - very simple things, but things that resonate. The culture fit. Our campus is very unique, and I think that's something that's really neat about this place."

Sullivan said another advantage to teaching at Avila has been the freedom he's been given to be creative in developing the curriculum in the School of Science and Health. He also gained a valuable mentor in S. Marie Joan Harris, who today serves as Avila's provost and vice president for academic affairs.

"The blessing for me was Sr. Marie," Sullivan said. "She was an outstanding role model for me. As I watched her, I learned about the teacher I wanted to be."

Sullivan's favorite memories over 38 years at Avila, not surprisingly, revolve around many of the students he's worked with, especially "students facing challenges ... it's very fulfilling to see them overcome those challenges and reach success." He spoke of one young lady, not unlike the woman who had stepped foot in his office all those years ago, who met him in a hallway in O'Rielly Hall one day. She told him she'd driven over from Columbia, Mo. just to say hello and remind him of something he once told her.

"She asked me if I remembered her and said, 'I was in your general chemistry class, and at the end of the class, my grade was a D,'" Sullivan said. "She told me that I'd told her, that even though she had a weak educational background, she could be a success.





"She graduated with a master's degree in nursing from the University of Missouri. She said that the message that she could make it stuck with her as she advanced in her education."

Sullivan, who also serves on the board of the KC Lyric Opera Guild, said he also loves the arts, traveling

– he recently returned from a two-week cruise in the Mediterranean – and dabbling in his garden. And, he hopes to use his pulpit as a former leader of a national organization to spread the word of Avila.

"I remember when Dr. (Steve) Daggett (chair of Avila's biology department) and I were sitting

down with delegates of the American Dental Education Association around 2002, and they said they'd never heard of Avila until I became involved," he said. "I hope I've helped change that." 🐾

Long-lasting friendship has its roots at Avila, which also helped form doctors' philosophies of being advocates for their patients

At first glance, it's not immediately evident why Avery Abernathy, D.O., '03 and Jason Gatewood, M.D., '01 are the best of friends and have been the past 14 years.

On the surface, they don't appear to have much in common. Abernathy meets strangers with a self-assured-yet-warm manner that makes you feel you've known him for years. Gatewood is quieter, a little more casual, with a gentle demeanor, but no less friendly and cheerful.

Then, the two begin interacting, and it all becomes obvious. The smiles and laughter come easy and often. They talk about the past, about the care-free days as undergraduate college students, about various adventures through medical school and their residencies, about their families and future. One finishes the other's thoughts and statements often, and it's always accompanied by a knowing smile. You'd think the two were close brothers, and in every sense but a common bloodline, they are.

And it all began at Avila University.

They first met as wide-eyed freshman roommates and soccer teammates, Abernathy hailing from the more isolated confines of Manhattan, Kan., Gatewood from Broken Arrow, Okla., a suburb of Tulsa. They came loaded with enthusiasm and ambition, ready to take on the world. And take it on they did, rolling through their undergraduate years with honors, both deciding on – yet taking much different paths – becoming physicians and helping people. Finally, they ended up again back in the same city,

where they're furthering their medical professions and continuing a friendship that, by all indications, will be ingrained in them forever.

All along the way, the pair of 32-year-olds, who were best men at each other's weddings, said the values and knowledge they collected during their four years at Avila were right there with them, especially when it came to choosing a profession in which they could greatly affect the lives of others.

"I think both of us work better when we interact with people, and I think a lot of that comes back to Avila," Gatewood said. "At a school that small, you see the same people so much. You do everything together. In retrospect, I realize the value of receiving my education in such a close-knit campus environment.

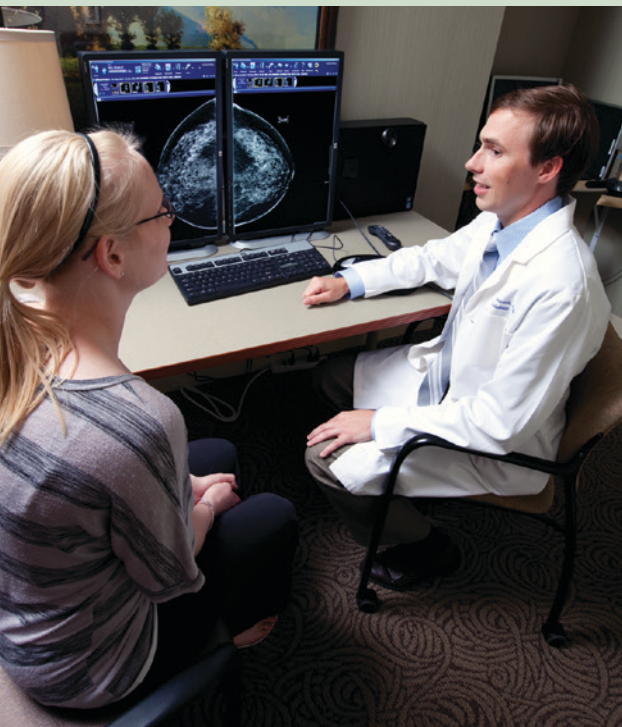
"At Avila, you learn to work 1-on-1 in smaller environments. You interact with faculty on a 1-on-1 basis ... it holds you accountable and motivates you to achieve your best."

Abernathy took advantage of his Avila experience outside the classroom as well, serving as a student senator and student government president his senior year.

"It was an opportunity to develop leadership skills different from those on the soccer field," Abernathy said. "As senate president, I had to advocate for the needs of the student body. Looking back, those skills served as a springboard to becoming a family medicine physician, a servant to my patients. I developed those skills at Avila, for sure."

THE DOCTORS





Top: Gatewood consults with a patient at his practice.

Bottom: Abernathy puts a patient through his paces during a health evaluation.

From the day Gatewood and Abernathy unpacked their belongings in their room at Ridgway residence hall, there was a connection. Of course, there was the common interest in soccer – Abernathy was a central midfielder, Gatewood a sweeper. But, it was more than that.

“We just had similar minds,” Abernathy said. “We had similar interests in music. We loved talking about the same things.”

The fast friends were nearly inseparable from the beginning, a fact that often brought them some grief from their fellow classmates.

“A month into the season, we would go everywhere together, and we got made fun of quite a bit,” Abernathy said. “I can remember waiting five minutes after he went downstairs to meet some people and then following, so we wouldn’t hear about it so much.”

Gatewood added, “I didn’t have a car, so I had to ride with him to go anywhere.”

There was another thing the two had in common at Avila – they excelled at just about everything they did.

Abernathy took a more round-about path to earning his bachelor of science in biology, with a minor in chemistry, transferring among several schools before finishing at Avila in the spring of 2003. In addition, he served on Avila’s student senate and as president of student government, was a member of the Tri-Beta Biological Honor Society, was a Who’s Who Among American Colleges and Universities Award recipient and, what he’s most proud of, received the President’s Medal of Honor.

“To win that Medal of Honor really meant a lot to me, because I took a tortuous path to get there,” he said. “I had to go through a lot. When they hung that around my neck, it was a proud moment.”

On the soccer field, Abernathy received honorable mention as an NAIA men’s soccer All-American for the 2001 season.

Gatewood received Avila’s most valuable player award in 1999 and was a two-time NAIA All-American

Scholar Athlete. It was in the classroom where he really shined. To his recollection, he made just two B’s his entire collegiate career – and they both came in non-requirement filler courses. He graduated magna cum laude in May, 2001.

Gatewood credited much of his undergraduate success to Larry Sullivan, Ph.D., dean of Avila’s School of Health and Sciences.

“I was confident when signing up for Avila that I’d be able to meet my goals,” Gatewood said.

Sullivan remembers well the contributions and work Abernathy and Gatewood put in as undergrads.

“I liked both of them very much,” Sullivan said. “I found them to be two very talented individuals, both very intelligent. They were excellent examples of student-athletes.”

Sullivan said he remembered the two best friends had very different approaches to their studies, especially as freshmen.

“Jason was the type who was focused and highly motivated to go into the medical profession from the start,” he said. “Avery’s pathway was any way other than traditional. He took more time to figure it all out. He had a life journey that took him to medicine. His real strengths were his interpersonal skills and leadership.”

“What made Avila attractive was that it was a small place in a big city,” Abernathy said. “You knew and were friends with everybody, and there were endless options of things to do.”

Gatewood added with a broad grin, “I’ve had the most fun I ever had in my life at Avila. Those were the glory days.”

Even before finishing their undergraduate work, life sent Gatewood and Abernathy separate ways.

Gatewood took the more traditional route in his education. After graduating from Avila in May, 2001, he enrolled at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine that August. It was during that time that he embarked on a one-week mission trip to Bolivia, where he felt blessed



Long-time friends Abernathy (second from left) and Gatewood are pictured with their wives, Andrea and Crystal.



Abernathy pauses for a photo while on a mission trip to Jamaica.

to provide care for the underserved.

"It helped me realize how few luxuries people need to be happy," he said.

Gatewood also performed service with Big Brothers/Big Sisters in Tulsa. It was also in Oklahoma where he married longtime girlfriend Crystal Mitchell, whom he'd met at Avila, where she played soccer and softball.

He started his internship and residency in radiology at the University of Texas Southwestern, Parkland Hospital, in Dallas, before moving to the Kansas University Medical Center in July, 2007. His mother's career as a radiology technologist helped draw him to the radiology specialty, and her battle with breast cancer in 2004 provided him the passion to pursue and complete a one-year breast imaging fellowship at the Susan G. Komen Breast Center in Peoria, Ill.

"Like Avery, I love to learn," he said. "I see radiology as an area where I get to learn about everything, from pediatrics to oncology to pulmonary medicine, everything. I see manifestations of all kinds of diseases. I get to see the anatomy of the human body. I enjoy that."

Gatewood currently works with the Alliance Radiology Group as a board certified radiologist subspecialized in breast imaging. He spends most of his time at the Gopfert Center for Breast Care at St. Luke's South in Overland Park, Kan. providing a patient-centered service

which includes all imaging modalities and image-guided biopsies.

When Abernathy graduated from Avila, he said he wasn't even sure he wanted to go into medicine. As an undergraduate student, he wrote a thesis dealing with Alzheimer's disease and worked an internship with Aventis Pharmaceuticals in Kansas City. That led to two years working in a Parkinson's disease research lab at the University of Southern California, where he worked with Dr. Giselle Petzinger, a neurologist who believed wholeheartedly in the duty physicians have in furthering medical research.

"We did some real benchmark, groundbreaking stuff there," Abernathy said. "As a physician, it gives you a whole other appreciation for how treatments get discovered and developed. It was an honor to work there."

In the end, however, it was what brought Abernathy back home.

"I got to see the research side of things, and that's when I decided I wanted the relationship part of medicine," he said. "That brought me back to Kansas City and medical school."

Abernathy earned his master of science from the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences in July, 2007 and graduated from there with his doctor of osteopathic medicine last May.

He also performed a medical mis-

sion in Jamaica, where he and wife Andrea, whom he met while at Avila, had spent their honeymoon.

"It's such an eye-opening experience," he said. "People would walk 10 miles and wait all day to see us, and if they didn't get in, they'd still smile and say goodbye. I got just as much out of it as (patients) did."

Abernathy is performing his residency in community and family medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and is scheduled to finish in July, 2014.

Now that their educational paths have brought them full circle and back to Kansas City, Abernathy and Gatewood have picked up their friendship as though they were never apart. They do plenty on their own, of course. Gatewood enjoys biking, local music and still plays an occasional soccer game. Abernathy still plays club soccer, is an avid boater and has run three marathons.

But, they get together often and, "just talk about what's going on." They hang out at each other's houses to watch games or cook out with their wives. Sometimes, they go to an area lake on Abernathy's 1974 Mark Twain ski boat, which he fully restored himself.

"We're best friends," Abernathy said. "We always will be." 🐶



Undergrad students get article published in periodical

Avila University biology professor Robert Powell, Ph.D., has had more than 100 works of his writing published in books and magazines over the years, so he knows what he's talking about when he says it's difficult and rare for undergraduate students to get anything published.

But a pair of Powell's students at Avila bucked those odds.

Paul Hillbrand and Aaron Sloan, both seniors-to-be, had their paper, entitled "The Terrestrial Reptiles of San Salvador Island, Bahamas," appear in the September issue of the International Reptile Conservation Foundation's *Reptiles & Amphibians*. William Hayes of Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, Calif. is listed as a third author on the paper.

"Honestly, it was pretty exciting," said Hillbrand, who in addition to being a top-notch herpetology student also captains the Avila men's soccer team. "This was a good foot in the door. Hopefully, it will help me get into graduate school."

Hillbrand and Sloan made the trip to San Salvador Island during two weeks in May of this year. They each wrote research papers for their class, but Powell also asked the two to collaborate on a side project – writing a paper largely focusing on the shrinking habitat and behavior of the San Salvador Rock Iguana and Brown Anole,

species endemic to the island. Hillbrand said no one had documented the reproductive habits of the Brown Anole, but Sloan found a nest with two intact eggs and shells from seven eggs that had hatched. Hillbrand later analyzed them.

"The best part, of course, was being out on San Salvador Island observing and taking in all that we could," Sloan, who currently is studying abroad in Australia, wrote in an e-mail. "Paul and I have been in classes/labs together for the past three years and work well as a team. This was a tremendous learning experience and one that will positively affect us in the development of our careers."

First up for the two student biologists, however, is to finish up their undergraduate degrees at Avila. Sloan is scheduled to remain in Australia until December. Hillbrand recently traveled to the Dominican Republic with the Eagles men's and women's soccer teams to play some practice games and perform service work.

Once he gets back, Hillbrand said he's looking forward to captaining the Eagles men's soccer team to an appearance in the Heart of America Athletic Conference tournament and finishing his degree.

"Then, my dream is to get into Hawaii Pacific and get my master's in marine biology." 🐸

Biology professor honored for meritorious teaching

Avila biology professor Robert Powell, Ph.D., has been awarded the Meritorious Teaching Award in Herpetology in honor of his years of guiding undergraduate students in the study of amphibians and reptiles.

The award is sponsored by the American Society of Ichthyologists & Herpetologists, The Herpetologists' League and the Society for the Study of Amphibians & Reptiles and recognizes superior teaching effectiveness, mentoring of students and significant contributions to herpetological education. This was the second year in which the award was bestowed.

Nominations are submitted by students, colleagues or a combination of both. In Powell's case, Alicia Mathis, chairperson of the biology department at Missouri State University, initiated the nomination, and Bob Henderson, curator of vertebrates at the Milwaukee Public Museum, Matthew Gifford '99, Ph.D. and assistant professor at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock—and a former student of Powell's at Avila—and Avila alum Rodney Wittenberg '99, who works for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, also endorsed Powell's nomination.

What made Powell most proud, he said, was that he was selected for this award despite working primarily with undergraduate students.

"These professional societies usually focus on graduate students and graduate work," Powell said. "I wasn't sure they'd take my nomination seriously because of that. But, they took the undergrad thing to heart. That's the neatest thing about it."

In addition to his work at Avila, in the classroom, lab and field, Bob has directed 10 National Science Foundation-funded research programs for undergraduates. Participating students from all over the nation conduct investigations of amphibians and reptiles on West Indian islands. Of Bob's hundreds of scientific publications, more than 180 dating back to 1980, are with undergraduate co-authors, and undergraduates have published another 22 publications with Bob's guidance.

"Bob's contributions to undergraduate education in herpetology are unmatched," Gifford wrote in his letter of support to the Herpetology Education Committee. "This is most exemplified by the success of his (research experience for undergraduate) program, Natural History of a West Indian Herpetofauna. (The National Science Foundation) has supported this program for nearly 20 years, a degree of success that should be envied by all scientists seeking funding from this organization."

In fact, Powell said, of all the accolades he's received during his time in the classroom, laboratory and field, this honor probably ranks above all else.

"Absolutely, this is pretty cool," he said. "When I think of all the people who've been around a while, and to get this before them ...

"It's a crowning achievement." 🐍



Powell coils up with a Windward Racer (*Mastigodryas bruesi*) on St. Vincent.

Photograph by David Steinberg (2006)



Minding History

Couple surrounded by past at mercantile they operate in tiny Cockrell, Mo.

History permeates us. It surrounds us, affects everything we do. We can't get anywhere without having been somewhere first. We can't face the future without first recognizing and acknowledging the past.

Chris ('80) and Becky ('89) Glaze live surrounded by history more than most. That much is evident the moment one turns off U.S. Highway 50 onto Old Highway 50 and travel half a mile to the front porch of the Cockrell Mercantile Company, the

complex of household-goods shops the Glazes have owned and operated since 2005.

There's the vintage 1923 Fordson tractor that sits peacefully between the main mercantile building and Fiesta Cottage. There's the old, wooden cart that serves as a bed to pots of yellow and purple flowers. Red brick and cobblestone paths wind throughout the property, connecting each of five cottages. There are the buildings themselves, some built during or just after the Civil

War, all of which still have the original hardwood flooring.

There's even the antique fire truck the Glazes keep stored safely away in the garage, only taking it out for the several annual special events they put on at the Mercantile.

Walking into Cockrell Mercantile is like stepping into a time warp.

Standing on the front porch of the main mercantile building, Chris Glaze enthusiastically points across the street to a large white house known to locals as Cockrell Mansion.

"When folks went in there to work on the house a few years back, they found letters from Cole Younger in the basement," he said with great pride. "We have customers come out and tell us they used to live here, or used to live over there. We have an old stove and oven in one of our cottages. There's an old antique weathervane. The original sign from Highway 50 hangs over the entrance to the main house.

"We really love the history of the place. It's a big selling point."

The history of Chris and Becky Glaze stretches beyond Cockrell Mercantile. In fact, they owe a heavy chunk of it to Avila University. It was at Avila—it was College back then—where Chris and Becky first met. It was 1988, and Becky was a music and musical theater student in a class Chris taught as a graduate assistant. However, they wouldn't become a couple until years later.

"At that time of our lives, we were at different stages of life," Becky said.

After graduation, Becky continued attending Kansas City-area theater

productions, many of which included Chris in the cast. At one point, a mutual friend played matchmaker and set the two up on a date. Becky said they've talked to each other every day since.

They married in 1993.

The Glazes eventually left acting and theater work behind, but it turned out to be a long road in getting to Cockrell Mercantile. First, the couple moved back to Becky's home town of Yuma, a small, rural community in the northeast corner of Colorado. There, they took over operation of a large hog farm owned by Becky's father.

"Everyone asked, 'You're going to what?'" Becky said. "My father was president of the local co-op board in Yuma. We thought of it as an investment opportunity.

"I grew up on a cattle farm but knew nothing about pigs. We spent our entire savings on the down payment for the hog farm."

Chris said, "All of our actor friends would come out and visit and ask, 'Are you out of your minds?' But, I learned a lot. Her father is a genius at business and taught me a lot."

It was in Yuma where Chris and Becky welcomed their two children – son Matthew and daughter Katie – into the world. And, as the kids grew older, the Glazes began longing for a return to Kansas City, where the children would have more opportunities.

While living in Kansas City before, Becky had worked at Prydes of Westport, a gourmet housewares store in midtown, where she'd gotten to know the owner, John Perucca. And, at the time, Perucca owned Cockrell Mercantile.

"John called Becky and told her he was going to sell, and Becky's ears just perked up," Chris said. "Her dad was retiring. Everything just lined up."

Becky said it wasn't an easy decision, but she and Chris purchased the business from Perucca in the summer of 2005. The main store of Cockrell Mercantile – the Glazes lived in a one-bedroom apartment above it for two years before settling into the second floor of the main house at the back of the property – carries a huge selection of gourmet foods, kitchen gadgets, linens, cookware and the like from name brands. Cockrell Cottage highlights home décor and one of



the most popular items, Vera Bradley handbags. Everything and anything needed for baking can be found in Morton House. Fiesta Cottage, appropriately, carries a full, colorful line of Fiestaware. And, the Annex carries flower pots, antiques and serves as a clearance area.

It quickly becomes apparent when meeting the Glazes that they are true partners, both as spouses and in business. When answering questions about their history, one often jumps in and finishes the answer the other started. With the mercantile, Becky, who worked at a credit union for 12 years, controls the business end of things, while Chris handles maintenance of the property. It's a tall task. Those old buildings always seem in need of fixing. The business employs 22, most part-time. The Glazes operate a Web site for the business (www.cockrellmercantile.com) and keep an e-mail list. Customers are always offered free coffee when they walk in as well as free giftwrapping.

"We offer enough to bring people

out to take a look," Becky said. "We try to carry good quality. We want to offer something for everybody."

Though it's been two decades since the two matriculated at Avila, Chris and Becky Glaze maintain strong ties to the school and hold fond memories of time spent on campus.

"I started at Avila in 1976 when Goppert (Theatre) first opened, so it was an exciting time," said Chris, who as a senior starred in a two-man show with classmate Pat Van Buskirk ('80) he still talks about with excitement today and is still remembered around the Avila campus. He beams when he talks about acting in productions of "Paint Your Wagon" and "Oklahoma."

He also was Avila's Medal of Honor winner his senior year.

"The scary part was that Avila was such a female-based college, but theater was mostly males," he said. "It was great, because being such a small community, you had to do everything, from working on sets

to costumes. Everybody supported everything."

Becky Glaze said Avila was a perfect fit for her after growing up in Yuma.

"It was nice coming to a smaller school," she said. "It provided the small, family environment I was used to."

Chris said he still drives visitors to Cockrell over to Avila to show them campus.

"Since I've been there, things have changed so much," he said.

Chris said, eventually, he might return even closer to his Avila roots. Once the kids grow up and leave the home to start their own adult lives, he said he'd like to return to acting.

"I still have some of that bug to get out of my system," he said.

Until then, however, this Avila couple will continue living in their tiny town with their big store.

"Mom and pop stores were dwindling," Chris said, "but now they're coming back. People love to come out, and we love having them." 🍷



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Angie
Heer



Robin
Rowland

New executives lead Advancement team

Avila University's Advancement fundraising team took a big leap into the future in September with the appointment of Angie Heer and Robin Rowland to executive positions.

Heer, who spent the last 10 years fundraising for Harvesters – The Community Food Network, was hired as the new vice president for advancement and external relations. Rowland, who spent the past six years leading development and public relations efforts at The Humane Society of Greater Kansas City, was appointed executive director of development.

"Angie and Robin bring a phenomenal record of success with their ability to organize and lead teams," said Avila president Ron Slepitz, Ph.D. "While new to university advancement functions and operations, I have no doubt they will bring us to new levels of success in all facets of our fundraising efforts, all the while enhancing the reputation and visibility of the university in the community."

As vice president for advancement and external relations, Heer will be responsible for leading and directing all university fundraising and alumni programs, including oversight of a new capital campaign. This will utilize her experience from Harvesters, where she was instrumental in that organization achieving phenomenal increases in fundraising,

leading a team in executing comprehensive major gift, annual, special event and planned giving campaigns.

"This is a very exciting time of growth for Avila University, and I am thrilled to join the university's dedicated team of faculty and staff," said Heer. "I look forward to raising the resources to continue Avila's excellence in teaching, learning and service to others."

Rowland's role largely will be cultivating and securing support from Avila alumni and friends of the university, planning a coordinated fundraising program and implementing Avila's new capital campaign. At The Humane Society, she increased fundraising revenue exponentially. She also created and implemented a major gifts campaign and \$11 million capital campaign.

"Avila University is well-known in the community for its commitment to education and community service," Rowland said. "I'm excited to join the Avila team and help support the efforts of the university as it continues to prepare students for their futures."

Slepitz said he was pleased to have these outstanding fund raising professionals joining Avila's Advancement team to lead it forward as the university prepares to mark its 100th anniversary in 2016. 🐾

Russian social service delegates compare practices

While visiting Kansas City, Russian social service delegates learned not only how American social systems operate, but also gave a class of Avila students the opportunity to learn how social services half a world away compare to those here.

"The thing that sticks in our memory is the visits to the schools," said Russian delegate Natalya Vladimirovna Gogol, through interpretation of translator Sergei Vladov. The delegation visited and studied public school special education programs at local elementary schools.

"It was very good we saw both public and private schools," Gogol said. "Also, seeing the (non-profit organizations) working with people of special needs."

While the needs and goals are the same, the Russians said social service systems in their country differed greatly from those in the U.S.

"Our systems are very different in structure, though all the issues are the same and the level of practical work is similar," said delegate Yelena Aleksandrovna Zotkina. "Here,

there is much more de-centralization. Everything is done at the state level. In Russia, it's all very centralized.

"And, in our situation, the percentage of charitable donations is low. We operate pretty much by what we get from our government. There's much more comprehensive government support."

Delegate Yelena Yuryevna Golovinskaya said her country is in the initial stages of transitioning to more of a U.S. model when it comes to fundraising.

"Our country has passed legislation that has made donations tax exempt and have added other incentives," she said.

Having the opportunity to spend a week with and learn from the Russian contingent was an invaluable learning tool for the Avila students, all members of Professor Elaine Wright's SW 290 social work class.

"It's been very valuable making connections, getting questions answered," student Dereik Domeresse said.

"There's been a lot of interaction, a lot of learning from a global context." 🐾

Eagle Madness



Homecoming 2011 took place the weekend of Oct. 7-9. On Friday night, students enjoyed the Eagle Madness pep rally. Dr. Tom and Virginia Coppinger '58; Larry T. Hayes, Sr. '11, Mary and Aleta Hayes; Charlene Gould, Ph.D., and Belinda Troxler '88; and Moe and Bobbi Courville '58 enjoyed the Dinner Theatre before the production of "Rumors" in the Goppert Theatre.

Dinner Theatre



Honored Class Reception



Tailgate and Football



On Saturday, the Homecoming Tailgate was held for the first time on Avila's campus as the team played on its new home field at the Zarda Athletic Complex. The honored class of '61 and their guests enjoyed a Saturday evening reception to share memories and create new ones.



Alumni Awards



The Alumni Awards Luncheon was held on Sunday. Honoring seven alumni, including Christine L. Brough, Mary J. Hallett '61, and Mary Ellen Clark '73, this ceremony recognizes alumni and friends who generously give service, time and creativity to their communities, their professions and Avila University.



Let the good times roll.



36th Annual Steer Dinner Saturday, February 18, 2012 6:30 p.m.

Benefitting the Annual Scholarship Fund for the students of Avila University

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Joe and Sue Fahey, Event Chairpersons

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For more information, contact Robin Rowland at 816-501-2450

or email robin.rowland@avila.edu or visit avila.edu/steer2012



Two recent graduates earn Clarion Awards

A pair of recent graduates from Avila University's School of Visual and Communication Arts were recognized nationally for their work by the Association for Women in Communications.

Michele Watley '09 and Valerie Reed '10 recently were bestowed Clarion Awards, which recognize outstanding achievement in all communication fields – broadcast, print, marketing and communications.

Watley's winning entry was in the category of "student events." "Open Mic. Night" was created for Avila's Black Student Union and held in the Thornhill Art Gallery. It was judged by the Edward R. Murrow College of Communication at Washington State University.

"To have my work recognized at the national level is a great achieve-

ment," Watley said, "and I am proud to have received this award. It is reassuring to know that the skills and lessons provided me by my mentors have paid off and assisted the client in reaching its goals."

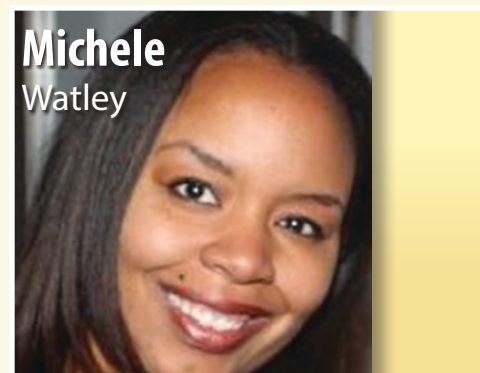
Reed received the award for her entry in the "student AD/PR category." "Missing Something?" was awarded the top honor by communication professionals in the Washington D.C. area.

"Earning a Clarion is a huge accomplishment and surprise," Reed said. "I am honored to have been recognized for my work with the Bank of Lee's Summit."

Communication professor Linda Strelluf said, "Michele and Valerie are dedicated, creative and hard-working women. I'm very proud of them."



Valerie
Reed



Michele
Watley

December 3, 2011

Alumni Night at the Missouri Mavericks

Join us as the Mavericks take on the Dayton Gems at the Independence Events Center at 7:05 p.m. Discounted tickets are just \$20 for seats in section 117, a \$6 per ticket savings.

January 5, 2012

Thirsty Thursday

Location coming soon—watch our Facebook page, website and your e-mail inbox!

Join fellow alumni from 5 to 7 p.m. for free appetizers from the Alumni Association (drinks on your own). Meet up with old friends or make some new ones!

January 28, 2012

Alumni Ski Night at Snow Creek

Join us for a night on the slopes. Ski or board from 7 p.m. until 2 a.m. at a discounted rate. Don't miss out on this winter fun!

January 30, 2012

Alumni Association Board Meeting

Bimonthly board meeting held in the Barefoot room in the Whitfield Center at 6 p.m. Alumni are welcome to attend.

March 1, 2012

Thirsty Thursday

Location coming soon—watch our Facebook page, website and your e-mail inbox!

Join fellow alumni from 5 to 7 p.m. for free appetizers from the Alumni Association (drinks on your own). Meet up with old friends or make some new ones!

March 28, 2012

Alumni Association Board Meeting

Bimonthly board meeting held in the Barefoot room in the Whitfield Center at 6 p.m. Alumni are welcome to attend.

April 27, 2012

Great Wolf Lodge Alumni Retreat

Bring your family and join your fellow Avila alumni for a weekend getaway at the Great Wolf Lodge in Kansas City, KS. Avila's reduced room rate is \$149 per night for a family suite. Six waterpark passes are included with each room. Waterpark passes can be picked up at 1 p.m. and room check in is at 4 p.m. Join the Alumni Association for a get together at 7:30 p.m. on Friday evening in the Northwest Territory A and B rooms for family fun and prizes.

To make your reservation, call the Great Wolf Lodge at 1-866-944-WOLF and identify yourself with reservation #1204Avil_001. Rooms sell out quickly, so make your reservations today!

For more information or to make reservations for these events, contact Susan Randolph at (816) 501-3780 or susan.randolph@avila.edu.



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Worlds of Fun

Worlds of Fun was the place to be on June 11 for the Alumni Association picnic and day at the park. Over 100 alumni and their families came out for a day of play, taking advantage of our discounted ticket and picnic combo. The weather was perfect for coaster riding and spending time with new and old friends. This is an annual event, so watch for more information to come soon about next year's day at Worlds of Fun!



Schlitterbahn

On Saturday, July 16, 75 alumni, family and friends spent the day slip-sliding away at the Schlitterbahn waterpark in Kansas City, KS. Alums were able to purchase discounted tickets through the Avila Alumni Association. While at the park, guests were able to meet members of the alumni and advancement team, register for prizes and enjoy a free ice cream treat.



Thirsty Thursdays – Bringing people together!

Are you looking for an easy and fun way to find out what is happening on campus, connect with other alumni, make new friends or just have something to do? Join us for our Thirsty Thursday events. Held every other month on the first Thursday of the month at various local restaurants, the Alumni Association provides free appetizers, and you purchase your drinks. Swing by between 5-7 p.m. to join in the fun!

Watch the Alumni Association Facebook page, website, and your e-mail for locations!

Upcoming Thirsty Thursday dates!

- January 5th
- March 1st
- May 3rd



'61 Bonnie Hudson Gunckel was honored this spring by the Indiana Dietetic Association with the Honored Dietitian Award, the highest honor given a registered dietitian in the state. She is now retired and volunteers as newsletter editor for the Dietetics in Health Care Communities, a national practice group of the American Dietetic Association. She is looking forward to her 50-year class reunion at Avila this fall.

'62 S. Rose McLarney is an adjunct professor teaching a class in Restorative Justice at Avila University after 12 years working with prisoner re-entry. She also is co-chair of the Missouri Restorative Justice Coalition and coordinates a Kansas City, Mo. group working for restorative justice. She lives in Kansas City.

'62 Kathy Lewellen Phillips is an ESL tester for Gwinnett Tech and resides in Lawrenceville, Ga.

'67 Brenda Wood Isom celebrated 50 years of marriage in 2010 with husband Freddie as he turned 75 and she 70. The couple has two children, four grandchildren. She retired from the KCK School District in 1997 and from the North Kansas City School District in 2002. She has celebrated her 53rd high school reunion and 44 years as a graduate of Avila. She was a member of the first class to enter Avila at the current facility at 119th Street and Wornall Road. Windows were still being installed during the first day of classes, she recalled.

'68 Susan England Smith is retired, and she and husband Paul have spent the summer caring for their five grandchildren at their home in Little Rock, Ark.

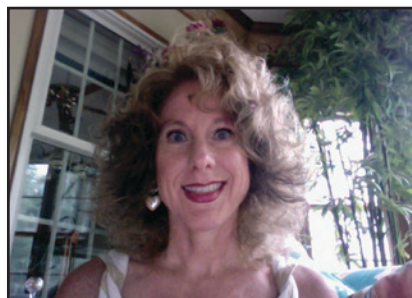
'73 Karin Spinner Capron is retired and living in Mission, Kan. She graduated from Avila with a degree in chemistry and was the only woman to work in the EPA laboratory in Kansas City at that time. She gives much of the credit for her professional success to the mentoring she received at Avila from S. Marie Joan Harris, now the university's provost.

'73 Eunice Kramer is retired and serves as a host family for international students in her home area of Redondo Beach, Calif. During the summer, she hosted four middle schools students from Nanjing, China. They hosted a young woman from Japan in August and in September, two students from Denmark and Belgium. She also is in training with her yellow labrador retriever, Buddy, to become a therapy dog and visit hospitals and nursing homes.

'75 Ann Suellentrop is a project organizer for Physicians for Social Responsibility and is spearheading a movement to repurpose a plant that supplies components for nuclear weapons being built in Kansas City, Mo. to renewable energy production. She lives in Kansas City, Kan.

'75 Michelle Bush Parrish lives in Temperance, Mich. and enjoys spending time with her three grandchildren – Baron Brunnworth, 4, Amelia Brunnworth, 3, and Kaija Dorris, 3.

'76 Jeanne Steffens Lichty is a research nurse in the department of leukemia at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. She has two daughters – Lindsey, 27, now living in Houston after working and living in New York City for three years after graduating at the University of Texas, and Ali, 26, also back in Houston after receiving her masters from the University of Denver.



'77 Patty Dean McLaughlin moved with her husband last summer to Sedalia, Mo., where he is an anesthesiologist. Traveling continues to be a favorite pastime.

'85 Susanna Velasquez has been living in Los Angeles for the past nine years where she is working in film and television. She recently worked with former "CHIPS" star Erik Estrada in the film "Inspector Sanchez," which was nominated for best comedy at the 168 Film Festival. She currently can be seen in a Comcast commercial and in repeat episodes of the TV show "The Game" on BET as Marta the maid. Outside the industry, Susanna stays involved with her church by singing on the worship team and going on mission trips to Mexico.

'85 Greg Lever was appointed by Kansas City, Mo. Mayor Sly James to serve on the Citizens Commission on Municipal Revenue. He is a business development manager for Taliaferro & Browne Inc. and lives in Kansas City, Mo.

'89 Rev. Dr. James (Alex) Alexander, DD has accepted a position as a community health worker at the Kansas City Free Clinic as well as a position as HIV educator at Truman Medical Center.

'89 Mary Fuhrman Wendt moved to Goodland, Kan. In 2010 to take a position as rehabilitation services counselor at SRS. She helps people with physical or mental disabilities find and keep jobs. She has a son, Dustin, 16, and daughter, Kailey, 19, who is a student at Concordia Community College in Beloit, Kan.

'01 Michael Derting was featured in a new show on the Starz network, "The Boss," starring Kelsey Grammar. He also was featured in the reality TV show, "Guilianna and Bill," filmed in Chicago. He's a member of the Appetite Theater, where he acts, produces and directs. He works as communication center coordinator at the Elysian Hotel and works for Premiere on-call doing national radio acting gigs for morning shows.

'02 Nicole Kelly Carroll married Derek Carroll May 7, 2011. The couple resides in Kansas City, Mo.



'02 Eric Schroer and Jenifer Dusenberg-Schroer welcomed their first child, Tinsley Reese, on Feb. 18, 2011. Eric is an enrollment representative at Baker University, and Jenifer is the director of marketing at Gemaco Inc.



'02 Jessica Agnelly Krawczyk married Thad Krawczyk in June, 2011. She and her husband live in Blue Springs, Mo. She joined the law firm of Langdon & Emison in 2010 and represents individuals who have been injured by defective products and pharmaceuticals and the families of those who have been killed by such products. Jessica began her legal career in Washington D.C. as a judicial law clerk in the D.C. Court of Appeals. Upon returning to the Kansas City area, she clerked for the Honorable Ronald R. Holliger at the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District in Kansas City.

'02 Molly Kennedy Groebe recently switched jobs to work for Community Health Charities as a campaign and marketing manager. She and husband Matt recently welcomed daughter Kaitlin Jean on May 11, 2011. She weighed 5 pounds, 11 ounces and was 18 ¾ inches long.



'03 Angi Holland Rigot is a senior marketing specialist at Farmers Insurance and lives with her husband and daughters Kaitlyn, 3, and Julia, 5 months, in Lee's Summit, Mo.

'03 Ahmad Ashkar is working with Hult Global Case Challenge, a social entrepreneurship platform he founded with former President Bill Clinton while working on his MBA. The Global Case Challenge has become the largest crowd-sourcing platform in the world focused on tackling global social challenges.

'04 Diane Euston earned her graduate certification in high school English from Avila in 2011 and accepted a position as a high school English teacher at Renaissance Academy, a charter school in Kansas City, Mo.

'05 Natasha Collins Parker accepted a position with BCS Apparel, a division of Design Resources Inc., as a licensing coordinator. She resides in Kansas City, Mo.



'05 Anthony Rigolizzo and wife Emilie Pierson Rigolizzo ('03) welcomed their first child, Anthony James, in October of 2010. Anthony works as an apprentice for Sheet Metal

Workers Union No. 2 in Kansas City, Mo. Emilie is employed as a charge nurse at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. The family resides in Mission, Kan.

'07 Kristin Meyer Van Court and husband Phillip announced the arrival of their first-born daughter, Caroline "Callie" Faith, on April 28, 2011 in Wichita. Callie weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces and was 20 inches long. The family resides in Salina, Kan., where Kristin is a labor and delivery nurse and Phillip is a general manager for Scoular Grain.

'07 Jenyl Hampel Hart lives in Richmond, Mo. and gave birth to baby boy, Andrew Samuel Hart, Aug. 3, 2011.

'07 Jill Montgomery is engaged to Tech. Sgt. Robert Eugene Powell. The two are planning a June 2, 2012 wedding in Kansas City, Mo..



'08 Shawn P. Lang recently held a successful book signing for her work, "Heart Condition from Religiosity to Relationship with the Creator," published by WestBow Press, Aug. 7, 2011 in Metairie, La. She works as a manager of postal relations at DST Mailing Services and lives in Lee's Summit, Mo.

'09 Whitney Wegman moved to Atlanta upon graduation and worked for two years acting in theater, film and television. Some notable jobs included working on Tyler Perry's "Meet the Browns," "Vampire Diaries," "Thesis" as

part of the 48-Hour Film Challenge, Whitestone Motion Pictures' "Gray Sun," and On Stage Atlanta's production of "The Dead Guy." She recently moved to Charlottesville, Va. and is starting her master's program in acting at the University of Virginia.

'09 Dedee Wang is teaching economics organizational policy and strategy business research at UIC (Hong Kong Baptist University).

'09 Jacqui Drummond Onken recently accepted a new job in advertising design/production with the St. Joseph, Mo. News-Press.

'10 Warren (Don) Dundego completed his masters of social work at Kansas University and received his LMSW license from the state of Kansas.

'11 Prescilla Borden recently began working at the UMKC medical school as a medical researcher.

2011 Alumni Awards

During its recent Homecoming celebration, Avila University recognized a group of distinguished alumni who either have exhibited outstanding and continuous service to the university or have exemplified its values in service, leadership and professionalism in their chosen fields.

The following individuals were honored: **Mary Ellen Clark, '73, Outstanding Alumnus Award;** **Mary J. Hallett, '61, Alumni Award in Nursing;** **Barry E. Berglund, '06, Graduate Alumni Award;** **Karen Baum, '94, Lifetime Board Member Award;** **Christine I. Brough, Honorary Alumnus;** **Christine L. Hands, '80, Alumni Achievement Award;** and **Patricia A. Evans '61, Honored Class Award.**

For more information about these alums, visit www.avila.edu/alumni.

in memoriam

'80 Cheryl "Cherie" Elvin, who graduated with a bachelor of arts in accounting, was one of 11 killed from flying debris in a plane crash during the Reno Championship Air Races Sept. 16 in Reno, Nev.

Elvin, 71 and living in Lenexa, Kan., was first listed as missing following the crash, but was identified by the Washoe County Medical Examiner's office Sept. 20. She was attending the air races with her husband, Chuck Elvin, sons Bill and Brian Elvin and daughter-in-law Linda, all of whom were seriously injured in the accident. They were among 69 people treated at hospitals after the crash.

They were attending the races when the pilot of a World War II-era plane crashed in to the ground, about 65 feet from the grandstand where spectators were seated.

'79 Eva May Lyon, 83, passed away Oct. 18, 2011. She received her bachelor of arts in elementary education from Avila University, then Avila College.

'84 Linda Elaine Barr, 69, of Belton, Mo., passed away Aug. 25, 2011 after a courageous and hard-fought battle with cancer. Linda received her bachelor of

science in elementary education from Avila in 1984.

'87 Eric Schmidt, 45, of Overland Park, Kan., passed away July 13, 2011. Eric received a bachelor of arts degree from Avila University in 1987 and achieved a master of science from Avila in 1989.

'92 Nancy Ann Campbell, 69, of Kansas City, Mo., passed away on Aug. 13, 2011. Nancy earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology from Avila University in 1992.

Lisa Alderman, 41, of Kansas City, Mo., passed away Aug. 25, 2011 at St. Joseph Hospital from a hemorrhagic stroke. Lisa's professional life was devoted to enriching the lives of children as a pre-school teacher aide at the Avila Montessori School from 2005-08.

Gloria Robertson Ragan, 88, passed away Oct. 7, 2011. She attended the College of St. Teresa, now known as Avila University, in the early-to-mid 1940s.

Nursing student honors memory of father by advocating for fight against cancer

Ben Sudbeck said he became involved in the fight against cancer before it directly affected his life a few years ago. He had joined his parents and the rest of his family at a number of American Cancer Society Relay for Life events in the northeast Kansas area (Hiawatha) where he was raised.

But when Sudbeck's father passed away following a battle with brain cancer in 2004, Sudbeck immediately felt the need to raise the bar in his advocacy against the disease.

Sudbeck, a senior in Avila University's School of Nursing, has done just that by starting a chapter of Colleges Against Cancer (CAC) here on campus.

"Once my father got cancer, I wanted to step up and do more," he said. "My brother started a Colleges Against Cancer branch at Rockhurst (University). I knew I wanted to get involved. If I wasn't going to do it, it wasn't going to get done."

"I just wanted to get word out and raise money for the cause, just get the wheels turning."

Sudbeck said the process in getting the local branch of CAC started has been a long one. He said he began the application process to the American Cancer Society a year ago and just recently had that application approved.

He said CAC's primary mission is to carry out the programs and initiatives of the American Cancer Society, and those tasks and enterprises are four-pronged: advocacy, cancer control, Relay For Life and survivorship, something he's very in tuned with following the loss of his father.

"We're hoping to help out with the Hope Lodge in downtown Kansas City, go down there and volunteer time," Sudbeck said. "That's where people who come here from out of town to get cancer treatments can go stay while they're here. In October, we're going to team up with Nurse Carol (Frevert) for Breast Cancer Awareness Month."

"Right now, though, I'm just trying to sign people up, get them involved."

Sudbeck said he began his college career at Kansas State, where he received a degree in biology before entering Avila's nursing program. He said the smaller size of Avila's classes and campus community have been an excellent fit for what he's trying to accomplish, including starting the Colleges Against Cancer branch.

"Here, you can make impacts like this," he said. "You can branch out and get involved. That, and I like the Catholic heritage and atmosphere here. It's been great." 🙏



Relay For Life 2011 at Avila University



"I just wanted to get word out and raise money for the cause, just get the wheels turning."



Meet Gary Gallup, your new athletic director

Gary Gallup, a veteran of 34 years in intercollegiate athletic administration, was appointed as the new director of athletics and recreation at Avila in early May and assumed those duties later that month.

A veteran of intercollegiate athletics at both the NCAA Division I and Division II levels, Gallup came into his new role at an exciting time – a new era, really – for Avila Eagles athletics, overseeing the construction and development of a newly field-turfed Zarda Sports Complex and the Mabee Pavilion, a second basketball gymnasium constructed just west of the Mabee Fieldhouse.

Those projects, in addition to getting Avila's nine fall sports teams ready for competition for the 2011 seasons, made Gallup's first few months in office busy to say the least.

"It is an exciting time for Avila athletics, and I am proud to have an opportunity to work with the outstanding student-athletes, coaches and administrators at the university," Gallup said. "We have a tremendous opportunity to develop the premier small college athletic program in the area and, working together, we are going to take full advantage of that opportunity to develop a first-class athletic program."

Gallup came to Avila from Kentucky Wesleyan, a college of about 800 students in Owensboro, Ky. There, he was responsible for leadership, administration, budget preparation and management of a 13-sport athletic program that competes in NCAA Division II. He operated that athletic department within budget while generating about \$500,000 annually in external funding to supplement athletic budgets.

Before that, Gallup spent three-plus decades crisscrossing the country in a variety of roles at a variety of places. He was associate athletic director at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, La. and also at the University of New Orleans. He also served as director of athletics at the University of Texas-Pan American, Lamar University and Southern Utah State College. He began his career in radio and television, doing play-by-play at games and also worked in media relations and athletic promotions.

"I'm looking forward to working with students, coaches, faculty and other staff to improve the experience of students and the profile of Avila athletics in the community," Gallup said.

Justin Berna was hired as Avila's new head football and Melissa Shipman new head cheerleading coach just months before Gallup arrived. He then was faced with hiring two new head coaches—baseball coach Daryl Cronk and golf coach Robin Nigro—during his first month on the job. 🏈



Justin Berna

Little did Berna know when he joined the Eagles staff as offensive coordinator in January that he'd be asked to step up to head coach just three months later.

While this is Berna's first position as a head coach, he takes over the Eagles program with a wealth of coaching experience. He was the offensive coordinator at MacMurray College, an NCAA Division III program in Jacksonville, Ill. and, before that, served three seasons as wide receivers and running backs coach at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo., where he also played.

At just 26, Berna is believed to be the youngest collegiate head football coach in the country at any level.

"I'm going to be here for the long term," he said when he was hired. "I want to make Avila a power here in Kansas City, and there's no reason why that can't happen."



Melissa Shipman

Shipman is in her fourth year with the cheer program, previously serving three years as the assistant/recruiting coach for the team. During that time, Eagles cheerleaders have finished in the top 10 in the All-Girl Division II competition. Last year, they had their best finish ever, ranking fourth and beating out the defending national champions from 2009. They also earned high honors in placing for their National Qualifying Video, including a top placement of third going into the competition.

Shipman stresses getting her cheerleaders out into the community to serve, and the Eagles have been involved in Kansas City-area organizations such as Bikers for Babies, March of Dimes and the MS Bike Ride.

Shipman felt she had the strongest group of cheerleaders to come through Avila this year and is looking forward to help them grow into successful athletes and individuals.



Robin Nigro

The Eagles men's and women's golf teams received a great two-for-one deal when Nigro was hired. Not only did they get a new head golf coach, but Avila golfers also received full access to the Robin Nigro Golf Academy in Martin City, Mo. and all the facilities, equipment and technology it has to offer.

"We're looking forward to making Avila's golf program the best it's ever been," Nigro said when she was hired in July. "There's no facility like ours. Players will have the latest technology to improve their games."

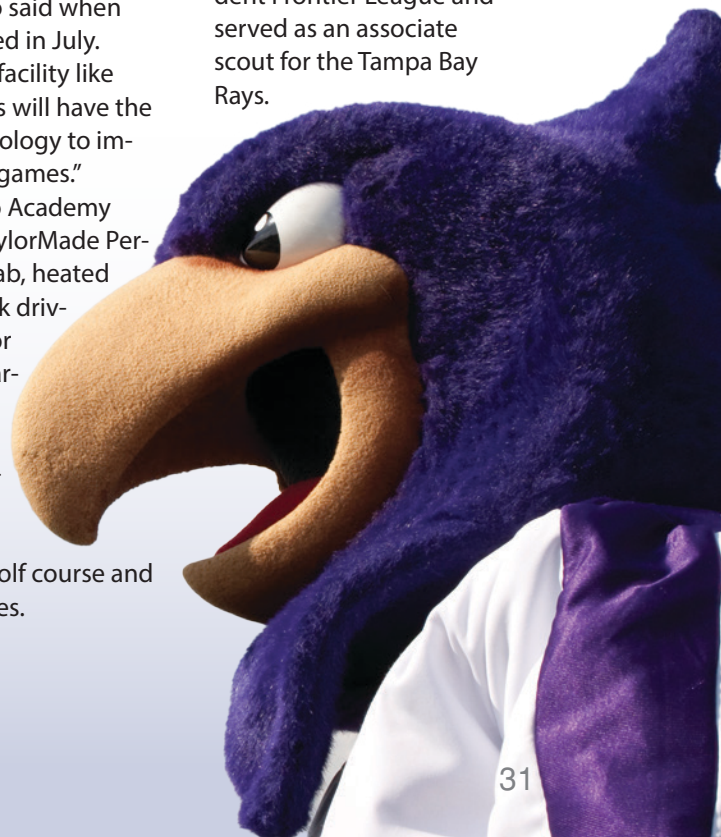
The Nigro Academy houses a TaylorMade Performance Lab, heated double-deck driving range for practice year-round, in addition to sand volleyball courts, paintball, miniature golf course and batting cages.



Daryl Cronk

Cronk was named Avila's head baseball coach in July after serving as an assistant coach for one season at Rockhurst University in Kansas City.

Prior to that, Cronk was an assistant coach at the University of Central Missouri in Warrensburg and Pittsburg State University, where he also played and was an all-conference, all-region and All-American pitcher. He played professionally in the Independent Frontier League and served as an associate scout for the Tampa Bay Rays.





Basketball player receives prestigious conference honor

Addie Buckler, a senior on the Avila University women's basketball team, recently was selected as the 2011 Heart of America Athletic Conference Emil S. Liston Award recipient. By earning selection for the conference award, Buckler automatically is nominated for the national Liston Award.

Since 1950, the award, which honors the memory of founding NAIA executive director Emil S. Liston, is presented annually by Daktronics recognizing a male and female junior basketball player based on scholarship, character and playing ability.

Buckler, a 5-foot-6 guard from Camden Point, Mo., was named as an NAIA Scholar-Athlete following the Eagles' 2010-11 season and maintained at least a 3.5 grade-point average as a junior. She played in 13 games, scored 10 points behind 3-of-4 shooting from the field and pulled down six rebounds as the Eagles finished 20-13, won the Heart of America Athletic Conference post-season tournament and qualified for the NAIA national tournament for the first time in school history.

"Addie has always been a leader in the classroom," said Eagles head women's basketball coach Larry Williams. "She is a highly motivated and responsible young lady, and we are thrilled that the NAIA is recognizing her contributions to the team and to Avila University as a whole." 🏀

Cheerleader named a 2011 Collegiate All-American

Emily Hamblin could be considered the quintessential Avila University student – a dedicated scholar in art education, enthusiastic participant on the school's cheerleading squad, well-liked by her peers and professors alike.

Now Hamblin, a senior, can consider herself among the elite collegiate cheerleaders in the United States.

Hamblin, who hails from Melbourne, Fla., recently was named to the 2011 Collegiate All-American Team by Inside Cheerleading magazine, which featured some of the most talented collegiate cheerleaders in the country. Each year, the magazine names an All-American team of 20 cheerleaders after evaluating nominations from cheerleading coaches coast to coast. The All-Americans are featured in the June/July 2011 issue of Inside Cheerleading.

As one of the 20 collegiate All-American cheerleaders, Hamblin is included among a group of her peers that cheer at such institutions as the University of Alabama, University of Georgia, Indiana University, Louisiana State University and San Diego State University.

"It was really exciting," Hamblin said. "I didn't think it was that big a deal at first, but it actually got me a job."

True, after seeing the recognition in the magazine, directors at the Shockwave Cheerleading Team in Lee's Summit invited her to be an instructor.

Though the people nominated for All-American were all collegiate cheerleaders, Hamblin said it was a coach from the all-star team in Florida she's competed on for years – and, a former cheer teammate from high school – who submitted her nomination. Having started in cheerleading at age 10, she ranked first in numerous na-

tional competitions while competing with Freedom Athletics in Florida.

Her first year at Avila, she helped the cheer team to fourth place in a national competition.

The next year, the team improved to second. This past school year, Hamblin and her Avila teammates performed in an open competition, against cheer teams of schools at all levels and sizes, and achieved a first-place ranking for the team and as a five-woman stunt team.

Hamblin said she has three semesters of course work remaining at Avila and two seasons of eligibility left in cheerleading. She said she'll most likely make this season of cheer her last, however, so that she can concentrate on finishing up her degree in art education in the fall of 2012.

Hamblin said she'll miss Avila, which she chose because of its art education program and strong cheerleading program.

"My best times here were at nationals, going down to Florida and competing with my team," she said. "My first year here, we won conference."

"But, I also loved my art courses, especially classes with Marci Aylward. She took us all over, to museums and exhibits. They have really good education teachers here."

"I like that you get to build relationships with your teachers. Hopefully, many of those relationships will last the rest of my life." 🎨



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I am grateful that Avila has given me the opportunity to excel and helped me grow as a person."

~ Joe Parkhurst '11



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The President's Circle

Avila's President's Circle was created in 2007 to recognize the distinguished alumni and friends whose level of private support continues to help transform the institution through planned gifts, lifetime giving and annual contributions. The President's Circle serves to:

- Provide an increasing pattern of generous support to the University to enhance quality in all of its academic endeavors and foster an environment of innovation and service to 'the dear neighbor;'
- Develop the active participation of alumni and friends to serve the institution through close association with the president and University community;
- Recognize those whose generosity serves the welfare and advancement of Avila and its students; and,
- Educate all constituents on the importance of philanthropy at Avila.

Thank you to all of the President's Circle members for your leadership and investment in the future of Avila University!

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The Avila Heritage Society was established in 1988 to recognize the remarkable contributions of our alumni and friends who have made provisions in their estate plans to support the ongoing and future needs of the University or have created an endowed scholarship fund. The following individuals and families are members of the Avila Heritage Society:

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Jean Pierre Medaille was a Jesuit missionary whose journeys took him through the towns and villages of south-central France from about 1640-1670. In 1650, he gathered the first six women who would become Sisters of St. Joseph and urged them to "practice spiritual and corporal works of mercy...which will most benefit the dear neighbor."

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Born Jeanne Fontbonne, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1778. After taking on several leadership roles, Mother St. John as she was called, was taken prisoner during the French Revolution in the 1790's and the order was dispersed. After narrowly escaping the guillotine, she refounded the Sisters of St. Joseph at Lyon, France in 1807. In 1836, she sent six sisters to America where they settled in Carondelet, Missouri.

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On October 15, 1650, Bishop De Maupas assembled the six aspirants of Fr. Medaille in LePuy, France, gave official church recognition to them as a religious community, placed them under the protection of St. Joseph and ordered that they should be called the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. He placed them in charge of an orphan asylum for girls.

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Bishop Joseph Rosati Order \$100,000–\$249,999

Named the bishop of St. Louis in 1824, Bishop Rosati oversaw the development of numerous schools, orphanages, hospitals and churches, including the Basilica of St. Louis the King. In 1836, Bishop Rosati asked for help in serving the needy of the region, which lead to the Sisters of St. Joseph coming to Carondelet, Missouri. The Sisters opened



up St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf in 1837 and it remains open today.

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In 1650, six women joined together in community under the patronage of St. Joseph in LePuy, France to benefit the dear neighbor without distinction. These first Sisters (Francoise Eyraud, Clauda Chastel, Marguerite Burdier, Anna Chalayer, Anna Vey and Anna Brun) were neither educated nor wealthy, but worked to support themselves by making lace, which still serves as a symbol for the Order today.

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Heritage Day Celebration 2011



The Honored Class of 1961, from left to right: Philippina Hoffman, Bonnie Hudson Gunckel, Mary Jo McLarney Hallett, Nadine Radtka McGurren, Mary Helen Leahy Ley, Susan McMichael Langenheim, Connie Kassick John and Barbara Field Meyer



Larry T. Hayes, Sr., '11, with his daughter, Mary



Geraldine Schermoly Schafer, '68



Left to right: Allison MacLean Lawrence, '05, Karen MacLean, Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., Patricia Daly Lyon, '00, Connie Kassick John, '61, Edward John, Geraldine Schermoly Schafer, '68, Larry T. Hayes, Sr., '11, and Jessie Fuller Clark, CFRE



Kathryn Batliner Dierks, Honored Class of '41, with Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., and Jessie Fuller Clark, CFRE

The Heritage Society

was established in 1988 to honor alumni and friends who have expressed support for Avila University through their estate plans or have funded a named endowed scholarship.

The Heritage Day Celebration is held on campus annually to recognize and show appreciation to Heritage Society members. We also acknowledge the significant financial support provided by our deceased members through the years.



Avila President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D. with Patricia Daly Lyon, '00



Karen MacLean and Allison MacLean Lawrence, '05



Edward and Connie Kassick John, '61

His wife might be the *actual alum*, but Bob Fisher's involvement with Avila University over the years has been so vast, you'd think he'd been part of the place his entire life.

It was Fisher's wife, Terry (Hassett) Fisher, B.A. psychology, 1979, who introduced him to S. Olive Louise Dallavis, at the time Avila's president. The two began a friendly dialogue that centered around this: Avila had an opportunity to be something special, but needed some help. So, he began seeking out ways he could lend a hand. For six years in the 1970s, Fisher was president of the President's Scholarship Club, which solicited initial givers and introduced them to Avila.

"We had 350-400 people who gave \$100-\$200 a year," Fisher said.

Fisher became fast friends with another of Avila's presidents, Tom Gordon, who suggested Fisher should join the university's board of trustees. And Fisher jumped in with both feet, not only serving on the board from 1999-2010, but serving as chair of the board from 2008-10 and also serving as co-chair of a capital campaign, which has culminated in \$16.5 million in improvements and renovations throughout campus.

"A lot of (the improvements are) visible," Fisher said. "And, I think a lot is less visible, and that's the quality of education and campus experience, both spiritual and educational. I believe Avila is bringing out a more developed, functional person who can deal with the real world with ethics, values and business competency."



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Bob and Terry Fisher '79
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